GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:149
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2000
TOBACCO A HARMFUL KILLER PRODUCT
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that tobacco is one of the major harmful and killer products in the country;

(b) if so, the facts thereof alongwith the number of persons who died due to consumption of tobacco during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the consumption of tobacco is increasing among women and children;

(d) if so, the details and percentage thereof; and

(e) the concrete steps taken/proposed to be taken to ban the use of tobacco in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a)to(e): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 149 FOR 29.11.2000

No representative statistical estimates of tobacco-related deaths are available. However, Indian Council of Medical Research has conducted a few community-based surveys in India to measure the mortality rates among tobacco users and non-users. Nation-wide information on consumption of tobacco is available from two surveys by. National Sample Survey Organisation, in the years 1987-88 and 1993-94. Over all consumption for the country in different age groups does not indicate any significant change.

Government has already intensified its efforts to discourage people from tobacco consumption. Under the administrative instructions, tobacco smoking is prohibited in hospitals, dispensaries and other health care establishments, educational institutions, conference rooms, domestic air flights, A.C. coaches of trains, sub-urban trains and air conditioned buses under the control of Government of India. In addition, the following measures have been taken to discourage consumption of tobacco:-

(i) AS per the Cigarettes (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1975, it is mandatory to display health warning on all cartons/packets;

(ii) Under the prevention of Food. Adulteration Rules, 1955, a warning `Chewing of Tobacco is injurious to health` is mandatory on Chewing Tobacco Products;

(iii) Direct advertisements relating to tobacco or tobacco-related products are prohibited on Doordarshan and All India Radio.The Government have come out with the Cable Television Regulation Act whichinter-alia prohibits tobacco related advertisements on cable television also;

(iv) The Government have advised the State Governments to discourage consumption of tobaccoproducts containing chewing tobacco including Gutkha; they have also been advised to ensure that tobacco products are not sold around educational institutions;

(v) Health Education regarding the ill-effects of the use of tobacco has also been stepped up by use of electronic media.

The Government is contemplating to bring a legislation to discourage consumption of tobacco. However, no specific time frame for its introduction can be given at this juncture.